The Little Back Parlor.

TURBY. Oh yes, yes, yes! say yes, you angel in black silk stockings & I shall be blest *(Kisses her hand.)*

Act I. Scene I.

London. Published by J. Duncombe & Co. 10, Middle Row Holborn.

Duncombe's Edition

THE LITTLE BACK PARLOUR,

A FARCE,

IN

One Act.

By E. STIRLING, Esq.

AUTHOR OF THE PICKWICK CLUB, BACHELORS' BUTTONS, CARLINE, WOMAN'S THE DEVIL, ROSE OF CORBEIL, BLUE JACKETS, ETC.

THE ONLY EDITION CORRECTLY MARKED, BY PERMISSION FROM THE PROMPTER'S BOOK;

To which is added,

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS—THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE BUSINESS, SITUATIONS—ENTRANCES—EXITS—PROPERTIES AND DIRECTIONS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

London Theatres.

EMBELLISHED WITH A FINE ENGRAVING, By Mr. Findlay, from a Drawing, taken expressly in the Theatre.

LONDON:
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Dedication.

TO MR. F. MATTHEWS.

DEAR MATTHEWS,

Allow me to dedicate to you the "LITTLE BACK PARLOUR"—a small apartment that your talents so admirably contributed to furnish.

Your's truly,

EDWARD STIRLING.

To MR. BRINDAL, MR. LEWIS, MRS. GARRICK, and Miss TYRER, I also beg leave to return my sincere thanks for their exertions in the "Little Back Parlour."

10, John Street, Adelphi.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. Simon Tubbs, (a Jeweller), ...	{ Mr. F. Matthews { Mr. Oxberry
Mr. Snooks, (an Exquisite), ...	Mr. Brindal
Billy Blue, (Servant to Tubbs), ...	Mr. Lewis
Mrs. Simon Tubbs, (Wife to Tubbs), ...	Mrs. Garrick
Miss Lucy Buggins, (beloved by Snooks.) ..	Miss Tyrer.

First produced at the Theatre Royal, English Opera House, August, 17th., 1839.
Time in representation—44 minutes.

COSTUME.

Mr. Tubbs—Blue coat, white waistcoat, nankeen pantaloons, Hessian boots, white hat, gloves, and cravat.
Mr. Snooks—Claret coat, pink waistcoat, blue trousers, boots, black satin stock, all very fashionable.
Billy Blue—Fustian jacket and trousers.
Mrs. Tubbs—Striped silk dress, pink bonnet, green shawl.
Miss Lucy—Plain white muslin morning dress.

J. R. Planché

THE LITTLE BACK PARLOUR.

SCENE I.—*A Jeweller's Shop. Counter, Glass Cases, Shop Stools, &c. A large Glass Door with green Curtains, flat, opening on the inside, supposed to lead to a back Parlour.*

Enter MR. TUBBS, *from* D. F.

Tubbs. (*Looking at his watch.*) Eleven o' clock! Dear me—Mrs. T. is a long while decorating her sweet person—we shall be rather late for the exhibition, I guess. I anticipate a great treat to-day: if there's one thing in the world I like more than another, it is paintings: noble study! my dear Lucy will be delighted to wander up and down the rooms, surrounded by the productions of art and genius. I feel inspired at the sound of genius—my ideas expand like an April sun. I'm in a glow—a perspiration of happiness! everything prospers with me. Old Amber took a fancy to me, and left me his business. Lucy took a fancy to me, and I took a fancy to her; she took a wedding ring of my own manufacture, and I took her to church, and then we took each other for better or worse. Lucky fellow! My old father used to say, "Simon, you dog, you was born with a silver spoon in your mouth!" and I think the old boy was right, and a whopper it is. My wife loves me—my business increases, and I am completely happy! Tubbs, you devil! you were born to happiness! [*Struts about singing* "Begone dull care," &c. [*Enter* MISS LUCY BUGGINS, L. H.] Ha! my dear Miss Lucy Buggins, how d'ye do? 'Tis a world since I had the pleasure of seeing you—before I was married, I believe. You look charming—killing, as ever, I see—eh? How is your excellent papa?

Lucy. He is very well, I thank you, Mr. Tubbs.

Tubbs. And your amiable mamma.

Lucy. In perfect health.

Tubbs. Yourself?

Lucy. Also well!

Tubbs. Why, then, "all's well!" ha, ha! you'll excuse—must have my joke. But pray walk in—don't stand in the doorway, you may get your dress splashed—the pathway is so very narrow, and we have so many accidents from the cabs and omnibuses at this corner. Talking of accidents—a dreadful one happened, just now!

Lucy. Indeed!

Tubbs. Yes, miss. I assure you there are many lives lost by cabs. This was a young man, a very fine young man, about my build: here's his card. [*Takes out a card and reads.*] "Mr. Augustus Julius Cæsar Snooks."

Lucy. Oh! [*Screams.*]

Tubbs. Mercy on me! what ails you? My dear Miss Buggins, you turn pale—you tremble; sit down. [*Seats her on a counter chair.*] That's right! What is it? Oh, dear! she's—hillio! [*Calls.*] Mrs. T! Mrs. T! what the deuce—I—she—fainted, by the lord! there's a go! Who'd have thought it? By goles, I shall catch it if Mrs. T. sees me! [*Fans her with his hat.*] Pretty dove! innocent flower! I'm in a strange position, and she's in an interesting situation! [*Looks round.*] Capital chance! I should like to brush the dew from those pouting lips. Egad! I have a great mind—shall I? Mrs. T's up stairs—the shop-boy's out. I always was fond of 'em. Damme, Tubbs, snatch a kiss! [*He kisses her, at the same moment* Mrs. Tubbs *appears at* D. F. *over curtain.*]

Mrs. T. (Receding.) Heaven preserve me! what do I see.

Lucy. (Recovering.) Where am I?

Tubbs. At No. 26½, Aldgate Without, miss, near the pump.

Lucy. Yes, I remember now you are near me. Did you say—pray tell me the dreadful truth—did you say he was killed?

Tubbs. Killed! who, miss!

Lucy. Julius Augustus———

Tubbs. Snooks! Lord, no, miss.

Lucy. Ministers of grace, I thank you! Yet, tell me.—Are his limbs broken—his skull fractured———

Tubbs Lord, no—it was too thick for that! He only bruised his elbow, and grazed his funny bone, that's all.

Lucy. Providence, I thank you! my prayers are heard. [*Sobbing.*]

Tubbs. Don't, pray don't go to go off again—wait till I can send for some salts: my bottle's empty.

Lucy. Cruel man! to trifle with my feelings. Did you not say that a dreadful accident had happened, and———

Tubbs. No, no, I beg pardon—you mistook. I said dreadful accidents did, sometimes, happen; but you are so susceptible, so much alive to the sympathetic. Oh! [*Sighs, and presses her.*] Oh, Miss B., you are so very soft!

Mrs. T. (Aside.) Here's a wild buffalo!

Tubbs. And now, my dear Miss Lucy, that you are recovered a little, pray take the protection of my arm to your father's—I'll see you home. Nay, I'll not be refused; we're old friends, you know.

Lucy. La! Mr. T, consider—what would the world say?

Tubbs. Pooh—pooh, nonsense! a fig for the world.—Arnt I a married man and soon hope to be the father of a large small family? So, no more objections.

Lucy. But, Mrs. T——

Tubbs. Oh, never mind her—she's nobody; an old married woman!

Mrs. T. (Apart.) I shall swoon!

Lucy. Well, since you are so very polite, and as I'm still rather weak, I think I had better defer the business I came upon, and accept your kind offer to escort me home.

Tubbs. That's right! give me your arm. [*Taking her arm.*] Now, we'll soon trudge home. [*Calls.*] Mrs. T, look to the shop! This way, miss—be careful, mind the scraper—two steps down, and a door mat.

[*Exit handing out* Miss Buggins, L. H.

Mrs T. (Advancing from door, agitated.) Am I awake? do I live? or, is it all a fairy tale? Was there ever such a monster? "Old married woman! mind the shop! nobody"—the crocodile! I'll let him know that I am somebody, though—to think that he should use his lawful wife in this manner! to bring his fine misses under my very nose, and only married a month! but I'll pay him off. I'll be revenged! A perfect domestic Blue Beard! He shall have a nice———

Enter Billy Blue, *with a pair of drinking horns,* L. H.

Billy. A pair of horns, ma'am, to be mounted with silver for Alderman Turtle, directly

Mrs. T. Don't bother me with the trash!

Billy. She's in her tantarums again—master's out, too. Crikey, won't he catch it not at all! [*Exit* 1 E. R. H

Mrs. T. The horrid wretch! he shall never hear the last of it!—to keep me waiting while he's parading the streets with his fine madams. I could cry my eyes out! [*In walking about, she kicks her foot against a miniature, which* Miss Buggins *dropped while fainting, and picks it up.*] What's this? I declare—a very nice, well-dressed, handsome young man! Brown coat, yellow waistcoat, white 'kerchief. I wonder who it be can be? How different from that reprobate, Tubbs! certainly, his face is that of a griffins by the side of this. He shall smart for this morning's prank, or I'm no woman!

Enter TUBBS, L. H. *wiping his forehead and panting with heat.*

Tubbs. Now, my dear, are you ready? we shall be rather late———

Mrs. T. (*Affecting calmness.*) Stay, sir, not in such a hurry, if you please! we are too late as it is. Pray, Mr. Simon Tubbs, who—when—who [*Bursting into a rage.*] was that fine stuck-up lady you had in the shop just now? What, I have found you out, have I? Oh, you giraffe!

Tubbs. Who—who in the shop? My dear, you—[*Aside.*] If she saw me kiss her, I'm blown.

Mrs. T. Yes, sir. Who was it? Answer me, sir, if you can! I saw all!

Tubbs. The devil you did! [*Aside.*] I'll try to laugh it off if I can. Who was it, my love—ha, ha! that's a secret, Mrs. T—a little private affair of my own—a secret, I say, not to be divulged. As though it could signify to you who it was. I have had other belles in my time, Mrs. Tubbs, you may be sure.

Mrs. T. Very well, sir, very well indeed! go, sir. Insult me—break my fond, tender heart. Oh, oh! [*Weeps.*]

Tubbs. My soul! my chicken!

Mrs. T. Don't give me any of your *foul* epithets, you ugly wretch! Didn't I see you kiss the girl in the public shop? You ought to be ashamed of yourself, you ought!

Tubbs. Bless my soul! what a fuss you kick up about it. Really, you make such strange charges—you are such an eccentric woman—such a little quiz——You know you are, arn't you? [*Attempts to coax her, at the same time endeavours to hide his confusion.*]

Mrs. T. Simon, simple Simon, your insinuating, artful

ways, won't do for me, I promise you. You have destroyed my matrimonial peace—you have sacrificed me, and my household gods to a snub-nosed girl! but don't let me catch her, for if I do, the hussey!—it's a happy thing for me, that I have consolation elsewhere. [*Sighs, and gazes on the portrait.*]

Tubbs. (*Observing her.*) A lock of my hair! poor thing. Come, come, you little puss—you must not shear off Sampson's hair by stealth. Thou fond Delilah! wilt thou have it set in a locket—eh?

Mrs. T. It cannot concern you what I intend to do with it. [*Sighs and gazes tenderly on it.*] It is my only joy!

Tubbs. Well, I never!—I ought to be her only joy. I insist upon seeing what you have in your hand, Mrs. T!—Give it up as you value my authority!

Mrs. T. I shall not, sir!

Tubbs. You won't?

Mrs. T. I won't!

Tubbs. Then, madam, I must use force—my prerogative is at stake. Don't resist me, or I may run my nails into you! [*Endeavours to obtain it—during the struggle he observes it is a portrait.*] A portrait!

Mrs. T. Yes, sir, a portrait—and what of that?

Tubbs. Matchless impudence! I never had a likeness taken, except a shilling portrait cut with scissors. It's one of your fellows, I'll be sworn.

Mrs T. Well, sir, as though it could signify to you whose portrait it is. I have had other beaux in my time, you may be sure.

Tubbs. The beaux may go to the devil! [*Paces the room.*]

Mrs T. For shame, Mr. T., to mention the devil in my presence. Oh! [*Sighs and kisses portrait.*]

Tubbs. Death and h—! there, I was going to say a bad word. Oh, woman, woman, give it up. I will have it!

Mrs. T. Would you rob me of my life—my soul, my tea toast, bread and butter, my treasure? Cruel, cruel, man!

Tubbs. Her tea, toast, bread and butter. Damme! she wants her bread buttered on both sides. I'm all of a heap! Undone woman, give it me! [*Snatches it, and crams it into his pocket.*] My wigs, this is a pretty affair—excellent, upon my soul ha, ha! [*Attempts to laugh.*] Fire and thunder! scarcely three months married, and a capital nice tale to get

abroad—laughing stock for the whole trade—ruin and misery—despair and madness! Horns and the devil!

[*Rushes into parlour, followed by* Mrs. Tubbs.

Enter Mr. Snooks, L. H. *dressed as described in portrait.*

Snooks. (*Gazing round.*) Nobody here—I'll wait till the little goldsmith comes, for he deserves my best thanks for his kindness after my cab accident yesterday. [*Sits* R. H. *counter.*] Charming Lucy—cruel Buggins—when am I to call you mine? Fool that I was to quarrel with her papa—to beat him at back gammon; since that fatal game, the doors have been closed to me—my letters unanswered, and the servants inaccessible to silver: gold I never carry. I shall lose her, I fear, and her ample fortune! [*Sings.*]

Re-enter Mr. Tubbs *from the parlour not observing* Snooks, *and seats himself on a stool, rocking himself, gazing at the portrait, and groaning heavily—a large phial written on* "Poison!"

Tubbs. Poison! I'll take it. No, I won't, I'll save it for my wife. [Snooks *turns round and recognizes him.*]

Snooks. (*Rising.*) My dear sir, I have called to return thanks for the kind attention you bestowed on me in the hour of distress. I am the ex-cab passenger of this morning.

Tubbs. (*Slowly raising his head.*) Sir, the unfortunate are ever intitled to such services as—[*Looks at portrait.*] Death and cross bones, [*Relapses again.*] it's the very Tarquin!

Snooks. You appear distressed, sir. Can I assist you?

Tubbs. (*Shakes his head.*) No, no, you have assisted enough here—here! [*Beating his head.*]

Snooks. Poor man! a pain in your head? A sharp, shooting pain, is it not? I do a great deal in that way——

Tubbs. (*Groans.*) Do you? Oh!

Snooks. Is it very bad?

Tubbs. Yes; but it'll be badder. [*Drops portrait.*]

Snooks. (*Picks it up, and looks at it.*) My portrait!

Tubbs. (*Starts up.*) I knew it by his book nose.

Snooks. How came you by this? where did you get it? speak!

Tubbs. (*Solemnly.*) Where did I get it? [*Shakes his head.*] You ask me that. I got it there—[*Points to door in little back parlour.*] My—my wife!

Snooks. Your wife?

Tubbs. My wife, Lucy, in there—reluctantly gave it to me.

Snooks. Lucy married to another? [*Sinks on a stool.*]—Lost! for ever lost! [*Hides his face.*]

Tubbs. Ditto, repeated! [*Hides his face—they groan audibly.*]

Enter Billy Blue, R. H.

Billy. Please, sir, you promised to call upon Mrs. Deputy Weazel at one, and it is now half past.

Tubbs. So I did, so I did. I'll go instantly—business must be attended to, and I'll take Waterloo Bridge on my way back, and ask where the water is not very deep! Sir—Mr. Snooks! you will oblige me by not stirring till I return. This matter must be sifted—my honour is concerned—I feel them coming—shooting up already! [*Touching his head.*] Oh, oh! [*Exit* L. H.

Snooks. Ass that I was—idiot—incurable fool! to go to Margate—on pleasure, too—ha, ha! and leave my Lucy to be snapped up by a mercenary tradesman! But why do I blame myself? Is she not false? is not perverse old Tubbs fastidious? then, welcome, revenge! Come hither immense Roland, for a prodigious Oliver! The though pleases me—yet how? But why—why do I sit here like a fool?

Billy. I don't know, I'm sure, sir.

Snooks. Peace, mysterious cub—peace. I am ill, weak, faint, woe begone! Oh, 'tis the boy—in there! [*Pointing to door.*]

Billy. What, missus, with the tea-kettle, sir? [*The door opens, and* Mrs. Tubbs *enters with a tea-kettle.*]

Mrs. T. (*Aside.*) A stranger! perhaps a customer. Where can Tubbs be? The gentleman seems indisposed. You appear unwell, sir; would you like to walk into the parlour and rest yourself a little?

Snooks. Thanks, dear madam: I am, indeed, rather unwell. An announcement, on the part of your brother, has so agitated me, that——

Mrs. T. My brother, sir! You must be mistaken. I never had but one, and he died of the measles, when he was a babby in long clothes!

Snooks. Your brother, madam, I repeat—the person that just now stepped out—he that is blessed with a lovely wife.

Mrs. T. (*Simpering.*) La, do you think so, sir? [*Aside.*]

A very sensible young man, this. Why, now I look at him, he puts me in mind of that confounded portrait. The dress, like as two peas! Oh, he must be the original!

Snooks. (*Abstractedly.*) Lost Augustus! cruel Buggins!

Mrs. T. (*Aside.*) Mumbling to himself! How he rolls his eyes about! Perhaps he's mad: Lud! I hope not! I'll try him, presently, with a glass of water.

Snooks. Has he been married long? Oh, curse that Margate!

Mrs. T. Oh, no, sir—a very short time, indeed. [*Aside.*] Quite long enough for me! He's certainly crazed! What a shame, to let him go about in this manner without his keeper.

Snooks. Why do I ask these idiot questions? I believe I'm mad!

Mrs. T. Poor thing, he knows his infirmity! I wish he'd go—I don't like his company much. I'll try the water. I think you had better walk in, sir, and take a glass of water—perhaps it may do you good!

Snooks. Thank you, madam, I will: but I fear I give you much trouble. Oh! [*Groans.*]

Mrs. T. Don't name it, sir. Pray allow me—[*Opens door.*] This way, sir. [*Exit with* Snooks *into the Parlour.*

Billy. What a queer chap that is: I wonder where he growed up? [*Leans over shop stool.*]

Enter MR. TUBBS, *hastily.*

Tubbs. Gone! Where's that Thingemy?

Billy I don't know, sir.

Tubbs. Not know! Why I left him here!

Billy. Who, sir?

Tubbs. The man that I left in the shop

Billy. Oh, he's gone into the back parlour with——

Tubbs. (*Surprised.*) The devil!

Billy. No, sir—missus, and the tea kettle.

Tubbs. Worse and worse! the minx! But I'll be divorced—Doctors' Commons! fire and flames! caterwaulings and catastrophes! Oh, Lucy! Lucy! [*Goes to door. Whispering.*] There they are! I hear them talking! I'll surprise them—I'll—no, I won't—I mustn't expose myself before the boy. Leave the room, sirrah! [*Exit* Billy, R. H.] Oh, my poor head! [*Walks about.*] Everything will go wrong—business neglected—but enough business has been done to-day already. I have a great mind to shut

up shop. [*Returns to door and listens.*] All's silent—I'll have a peep, lock the door, put the key in my pocket, and start to New Zealand! [*Kneels across the door way to look through the keyhole; at the same time the doors are opened on the inside, and* Snooks *speaks.*]

Snooks. You are all goodness! [*Kisses her hand, and in passing out falls over* Tubbs, *who has hid his face*—Mrs. Tubbs *screams*—Tubbs *seizes* Snooks *by the throat, shakes his fist in his face, and exclaims*—

Tubbs. Wretch! wretch!

Snooks. You say true, hated rival! I am indeed a wretch! But, you—oh, how much the reverse—blessed with such a wife! Oh, Lucy! Lucy! [*Rushes out violently* L. H. *pushing* Tubbs *aside.*]

Tubbs. Lucy! his Lucy! I'll fight you for her!

Mrs T. Don't attempt to stop him, Simon—he'll bite you! [*Runs to him,* L. H.] He wouldn't touch the water!

Tubbs. Silence! get out of my sight! leave me! let him bite. This is too much, madam—I can't stand it!

Mrs. T. Don't be a fool, Tubbs. Listen.

Tubbs. I have listened through the keyhole to too much, already, you Sycorax!

Mrs. T. I am sure I never did that in all my life! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, to accuse me of such a wicked thing! [*Exit into parlour, weeping.*

Tubbs. (*Goes to a cupboard, takes out bottle and drinks.*) I am a poor heart-broken victim of connubial perfidy!

Enter Miss LUCY BUGGINS, L. H. [*He conceals the bottle.*

Lucy. My dear Mr. Tubbs—pray tell me, do you know the gentleman who just left your shop?

Tubbs. Know him! yes, I do! [*Sighs.*] And so does the woman in the little back parlour. Look there—behold that room! it contains a wicked, rumbumpshus wife! I have discovered all!

Lucy. Discovered all! What does the man mean? What do you allude to, sir?

Tubbs. Why, to a guilty attachment between Mr. Snooks and my better no, worser, half!

Lucy. Gracious heavens! No, no—it cannot be!

Tubbs. Can't it! I can tell you, it has been! [*Going.*]

Lucy. Stay, stay—you do not mean——

Tubbs. I mean revenge—revenge! [*Clenching his fist, and taking a small knife from his pocket*]

Lucy. Oh, for mercy's sake, do not talk so! For my sake, spare him—he once was mine.

Tubbs. Then, why the devil didn't you keep him? You know him, then?

Lucy. (*Sighs.*) Yes, I am the most miserable of human beings! [*Sinks on a stool.*]

Tubbs. (*Running to her.*) You are not going to faint again, are you? [*Offers the bottle to her, but finding she has recovered, he drinks himself, and slyly conceals the bottle.*]

Lucy. Unhappy girl! ruined past hope!

Tubbs. What is the matter? I have trouble enough of my own, just now! [*She hides her face in her handkerchief.*] I wish she would go Eh! can it be? A thought flashes across my brain! It must be so! and why not? I was always reckoned a rum 'un among them! [*Adjusts his dress, &c. takes her hand, and speaks very subdued.*] Hem! surely this concern cannot—hem!—be for me? Oh, might I—I—hem! I hope—that in—that—soft, downy pillow—I mean, bosom——

Miss B. (*Weeping.*) Oh, no, no, no!

Tubbs. (*Kneels.*) Oh, yes, yes, yes! Say, yes, you angel in black silk stockings, and I shall be blest! [*Kisses her hand.*]

Enter Mrs. Tubbs, *in time to hear the last speech.*

Mrs T. (*Seizing his ear.*) You will, will you? These are your sly ways, are they? Pretend jealousy of me, to cover your own designs! But I have now found you out, have I? Oh, you——[*Pinches his ear.*]

Tubbs. Don't pinch so hard!

Mrs. T. You perfidious, circumventing little villain!

Tubbs. Something strikes me I shall go mad to-day. Misery! misery!

Mrs. T. Misery, indeed! You have made me miserable, you know you have!

Tubbs. There, now—[*To* Lucy.]—did you ever hear the like? The woman has lost all sense of shame. Didn't I see the man kiss you, through the—didn't I see you, and that Snooks—oh, oh! I say, didn't I see it with this eye?

Mrs. T. And didn't I see you kiss——

Lucy. I am sorry there should be any misunderstanding, but I trust that I am in no measure the cause of it. [Mrs. Tubbs *looks at her contemptuously, and retires into parlour,*

L. H.] I came, Mr. Tubbs, about a trifle, which I fear I have lost. Was anything picked up in your shop this morning?

Tubbs. (*Musing.*) Picked up? Yes, information that has distracted me!

Lucy. (*Aside.*) The man appears crazed. Good morning, sir I'll call again in a few minutes, and I hope to find you calmer when I return. [*Exit,* L. H.

Tubbs. Calmer! yes, in the stiffness of death, perhaps!

Enter Mrs. Tubbs, *in bonnet and shawl, at door.*

Mrs. T. Mr. Simon Tubbs, we must part. Your own unjust suspicions of me, coupled with your own shameful proceedings, render it absolutely necessary.

Tubbs. My shameful proceedings! This is too much—'pon my soul, it's rather too bad! Ha, ha! (*Endeavours to laugh.*] Oh, oh! [*Beats his head.*] Why don't somebody punch my head?

Mrs. T. What need of all this violence, sir? that won't excuse your perfidy. I shall pack up a few necessaries, and then take my leave of you for ever! [*Exit* D. F.

Tubbs. That it should come to this! Unhappy father, that wished to be! miserable Christian! Eh? he's here again! [*Looking off* L. H.] He is like an evil spirit—a sort of devil upon two sticks! I wish to the lord the cab had run over his infernal neck! I suppose he thinks I'm nobody—a cypher—but I'll let him know that——He's coming—what shall I do? I'll watch them—burst upon them suddenly—catch the villain by the throat, and run this deadly weapon into his body a little way! [*Hides in the clock case.*]

Enter Snooks, L. H.

Snooks. Yes, I will see her, for the last time, and learn from her own lips the reason for her cruelty and desertion! [*Knocks at parlour door.*] Be still, thou beating heart! [*The door is opened, and* Mrs. Tubbs *enters, with her bonnet and shawl, bundle, &c.*]

Mrs. T. Now, Mr. Simon—Ah! the lunatic again! Where has that fellow, Tubb, crawled to, I wonder? [*Aside.*]

Snooks. Madam, I come for a purpose which all true lovers must applaud——

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) Oh, lord! [*His head appears where the clock face ought to be.*]

Snooks. It is to take a last farewell of—[*Sighs.*]—your sister. Pray lead me to her!

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) Sister! gammon!

Mrs. T. I can assure you, sir, I have no sister. Pray leave me—you have been the cause of much misery in this family [Tubbs *groans.*]

Snooks. Madam, tell me—where is Mr. Tubbs' wife?

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) As if he didn't know!

Mrs. T. I am Mrs. Tubbs, sir———

Tubbs. (*Aside, sighing.*) You are, worse luck!

Snooks. You! What mystery is this? Who—who, then, is the young lady, I saw, at a distance, coming into the shop?

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) He's going it, nicely!

Mrs. T. I know not who she is, but this I know, in consequence of her, I am the most miserable of women!

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) Now she's going it a bit!

Snooks. What do you mean? Explain—explain.

Mrs. T. Must I confess my husband's shame and my own despair?

Snooks. Do, I entreat. Confess anything, rather than my intense agony should continue.

Mrs. T. Then, sir, there is something wrong———

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) I know it:

Snooks. Something wrong! What is it?

Mrs. T. A guilty attachment between Mr. Tubbs and that young person.

Tubbs. (*Aside.*) Well, I'm damned!

Snooks. Where are the unprincipled pair? give them to my just revenge! [*Takes out his penknife.*] Oh, for his blood! But why do I rave? Forgive me, best of women. Accept my thanks—on my knees—[*Drops miniature.*]

Mrs. T. Sir—sir—consider we are in the shop! What would the world say—my reputation! Walk into the back parlour, and sit down. Pray don't make a fool of yourself in the shop. [*Exit into Parlour with* Snooks.

Tubbs. (*Coming forward.*) Did ever any one see such barefaced work? They are as loving as two cats in a gutter!

Enter Miss Lucy Buggins, L. H.

Lucy. Are you more composed now, sir—because I wish to know if———

Tubbs. (*Pointing to door.*) Hush - hush! [*Going to door.*] Come this way—hush! [*Opens door*—Snooks *and* Mrs. Tubbs *come forward.*] Ha, ha—have we caught you, madam? Miss Buggins, look there—look there! Here's a lesson for wives and families!

Mrs. T. Unheard of audacity! [*To* Snooks.] Do you mark the utter shamelessness of the guilty pair?

Tubbs. Come, come—this won't do. No flummery—it's all discovered!

Mrs. T. It is, indeed, base man! [*To* Snooks.] Sir, I look to you for redress and protection!

Snooks You shall have it, fair creature. .

Tubbs. Say you so? Then take his damned portrait into the bargain! [*Kicks it towards him.*]

Snooks. My portrait again, by heavens!

Lucy. Which I dropped this morning in your shop.

Mrs. T. Which I found———

Tubbs. And which I stole. Lost and found! What is the meaning of this? Speak! my head spins round like a top!

Lucy. I came to your shop this morning, for the purpose of having this miniature set with pearls, but was prevented, from the information I received from you. On my return home, I missed it, and immediately hastened back to make inquiries, but you were too much agitated to answer me.

Tubbs. Say no more—I see it all—clear as mud? What a donkey I have been! My dear Mrs. T. forgive me! Snooks, your hand. The mist's dispelled—it's all cleared off—all fine weather. You know Miss Lucy, eh?—don't blush—sly rogue—she loves you—nay, I can tell—poor girl, she's lost in a Snook! Ha, ha—excuse me—must have my joke.

Snooks. If I might ask forgiveness of———

Tubbs. Poh—nonsense! Don't stand shilly shally—at her, man at once! Take first, and ask afterwards. [*Hands* Miss Lucy to Snooks.] Well, there never was such a perplexing mistake before, was there?

All. Never!

Tubbs. Not never. Well, thank goodness, it's all explained now. I must own I didn't half like it. I began to feel a little queerish—but that's all blown over, and I am happy. Quite happy?—no, not quite. There is yet one thing wanting———

Mrs. T. What is that, my dear?

Tubbs. The approbation of our kind friends. [*Stepping*

forward] One word. before I shut up shop, on a matter of business. [*Produces a Card, and reads it.*] "Mr. Simon Tubbs, Jeweller, &c. No. 26½, Aldgate, Without." This is my card—and I can only say, that whenever you kindly honour me with your custom, articles of the very best English manufacture shall be submitted to your notice: and if the house should, fortunately, be too small to hold you, I shall always be happy to attend your commands in "THE LITTLE BACK PARLOUR."

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

MR. TUBBS MRS. TUBBS. MISS BUGGINS. SNOOKS.

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